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Message Text

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43
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
---------- 072693
R 101438Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2609
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
USMISSION GNEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 5490

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SREF, IS, UR
SUBJECT: SOVIET DROPOUT PROBLEM AND ISRAELI POLICY

REFS: (A) TEL AVIV 5302 (NOTAL); (B) STATE 163671 (NOTAL);
(C) GENEVA 6396 (NOTAL)
1. GEGIN SUMMARY: YEHEMIA LEVANON, THE PRIME MINISTER'S ADVISOR ON SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN EMIGRATION, TOLD EMBASSY OFFICERS AUGUST 10 THAT SO FAR THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN ISRAELI POLICY REGARDING THE ISSUANCE OF AFFIDAVITS INVITING ALL POTENTIAL JEWISH EMIGRANTS AND EVEN SOME NON-JEWS WHO DESIRE TO LEAVE THE USSR. HOWEVER, THE GOI FELT INCREASINGLY THAT THE CONTINUATION OF SUCH A POLICY MAY PROVIDE ADDITIONAL JUSTIFICATION FOR THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES TO CURB THE JEWISH EMIGRATION PROGRAM UNDER ONE PRETEXT OR ANOTHER. THEREFORE, THE GOI FEELS CONSTRAINED TO REEXAMINE THE WHOLE QUES-TION OF ISSUING VISAS TO ALL JEWS AND OTHERS WHO SEEK ISRAELI VIZOVS AS THEIR PRICIPAL MEANS OF ESCAPE, BUT WHOSE ULTIMATE DESTINATION S A COUNTR OTHER THAN ISRAEL. END SUMMARY.

2. AT THE REQUEST OF EMBOFF, LEVANON PROVIDED ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS THE COMPOSITION OF THE PRIME MINI-
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STER'S SPECIAL EIGHT MEMBER COMMITTEE ON SOVIET DROP-

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OUTS WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED IN JULY DURING HTE JEWISH
AGENCY ASSEMBLY IN JERUSALEM (REF A). FOUR MEMBERS
ARE AMERICANS REPRESENTING HIAS, THE JOINT DISTRIBUTION
COMMITTEE (JDC), THE JEWISH WELFARE FEDERATION, AND
UJA. THE FOUR ISRAELIS ARE LEVANON; UZI NARKISH, CHIEF,
JEWISH AGENCY ABSORPTION DEPARTMENT, YEHUDA AVNER,
ADVISOR ON DIASPORA AFFIRS TO THE PRIME MINISTER; AND
ZEEV Y. SHEK, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR EUROPEAN
AFFAIRS, MFA. THE COMMITTEE IS EXPECTED TO REPORT IS
RECOMMENDATIONS IN ABOUT TWO WEEKS. LEVANON DID NOT
WISH TO SPECULATE IN ADVANCE ON THE NATURE OF THE RECOM-
MENDATIONS AND SAID THAT THE AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES
ON THE COMMITTEE MIGHT WISH TO INFORM THE DEPARTMENT
AND INS DIRECTLY.

3. LEVANON SAID THAT THE GOI'S FEAR THAT THE USSR
MAY AT ANY TIME USE THE QUESTION OF THE ULTIMATE DES-
TINATION F THE EMIGRANTS AS A PRETENSE FOR FURTHER
CURTAILING JEWISH EMIGRATION HAD HEIGHTENED ISRAEL'S
LONG-STANDING CONCERN ABOUT THE HIGH PERCENTAGE OF
DROPOUTS; HOW TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM; AND HOW TO OVER-
COME THE MORAL AND POLITICAL DILEMMA OF HAVING TO FURNISH
AN INCREASING NUMBER OF PATENTLY FRAUDULENT AFFIDAVITS
TO PEOPLE WHO HAD NO INTTNION OF COMING TO ISRAEL. THESE
WERE SOME OF THE ISSUES NOW BEING CONSIDERED BY THE
ISRAELI GOVERNMENT AND THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE.

4. THE VARIOUS POLICIES NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION INCLUDE
THE FOLLOWING: (A) AN INTENSIVE INFORMATIN CAMPAIGN
THROUGH RELATIVES AND THE PRSS DIRECTED AT POTENTIAL
EMIGRANTS IN THE USSR. THIS CAMPAIGN WOULD POINT OUT
TO THEM THAT IF THEY APPLY FOR EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL AS
A PRETENSE FOR ESCAPING FROM THE USSR, THEY ARE FORE-
CLSING THIS OPTION FOR OTHERS WHO REALLY WANT TO COME
BUT CANNOT BECAUSE OF THE OVERALL MONTHLY QUOTA OF EMIGRANTS
IS LIMITED TO ABOUT 1,000 PER MONTH. (B) ISRAEL MAY
REFUSE TO ISSUE AFFIDAVITS TO FRIENDS AND RELATIVES OF
EMIGRANTS WHO HAVE CHOSEN TO GO TO COUNTRIES OTHER
THAN ISRAEL. ONLY THOSE COMING TO ISRAEL MAY BE GIVEN
THE OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST AID FOR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES
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LEFT BEHIND. (C) ISRAEL MIGHT RUSH FUTURE SOVIET AR-
RIVALS IN VIENNA THROUGH QUICK PROCESSING, LIMITED TO
BAGGAGE CHECK AND MEDICAL EXAMINATION, AND SHIP THEM
ON TO ISRAEL ON THE VERY DAY OF ARRIVAL SO THAT THEY
CANNOT SEEK INFORMATION ABOUT ALTERNATE EMIGRATION
CHOICES. EMIGRANTS SEEKING TO GO TO COUNTRIES OTHER THAN
ISRAEL SHOULD PETITION THE HOST COUNTRY OF THEIR CHOICE
FOR PRMISSION AND AID TO EMIGRATE THROUGH THEIR CON-

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TACTS THERE.

5. IN CONCLUDING LEVANON SAID THAT AS YET NO DECISION HAD BEEN MADE ON THESE POLICY ALTERNATIVES AND THAT FOR THE PRESENT ALL REQUESTS FOR VIZOVS WERE BING SERVICED. HE SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THE INFORMATION WHICH HE HAD GIVEN TO US SHOULD NOT BE PUBLICIZED OR PREMATURELY PASSED TO REPRESENTATIVES OF U.S. JEWISH AID ORGANIZATIONS. HE HIMSELF PLANNED TO BE IN THE HAGUE AUGUST 20-26 TO DISCUSS THE SOVIET EMIGRATION AND DROPOUT QUESTION WITH THE DUTCH GOVERNMENT.
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